

Children's Department.

LETTER TO THE LITTLE FOLKS.

DEAR CHILDREN:—I wonder how many of you know that there are hundreds and thousands of boys and girls to-day, who do not go to Sunday-school. I suppose all who read this paper *do* go every Sunday, but just stop and think for a moment how queer it would seem if you could never go, could never hear your teacher tell about Jesus, and how much he loves little children.

I remember well, how, when I was a little girl, I looked forward to Sunday and Sunday-school with so much pleasure, and I hope you all do the same. Dear children, there are many, many boys and girls in this world who have never heard of S. S., who do not know that we have a loving Savior in heaven; why, many of them do not even have a father or mother, and are knocked around from one place to another without anyone to care for them.

You all know what an effort we, as Christians have made, to secure money enough to send missionaries to heathen lands. Do you know what we mean by heathens? Well, heathens are people who have never heard of Jesus, who do not know that there is a God; some of them make images of wood and stone and worship those; some worship the sun, moon and stars.

They do this because they feel the need of worshipping *something*, and know of nothing better. Now, the missionaries we send to them, are men and women who leave their homes and friends, and all that is dear to them, and go far away into these heathen lands, where they tell the people about Jesus; how he left his home in heaven and came to this world to suffer and die that we might all be saved.

These missionaries are doing a grand and noble work for God, and we should do all we can to aid them. Every penny we put in the mission box will help them in their work.

We cannot all be missionaries in *that* way, but we can be missionaries at home. You, dear boys and girls, can be little missionaries by hunting up the children near you who do not attend Sunday-school, tell them how pleasant it is to go, and try to persuade them to go with you.

I know of one S. S. where there is a class of about *thirty* little boys and girls; they are called "The Stars." Is not that a pretty name? I hope each one of you, who read this, will decide to be one of Christ's little "Stars," and will shine so brightly, that you will lead many others to Jesus.

LYDIA BERKLEY.

A BOY'S SUGGESTION.

About a year and a half ago a boy of sixteen conceived the plan of selling coal to the poor of the city of New York at cost. He was a thoughtful lad, and wished something could be done to alleviate the misery of the unfortunate. The plan he had formed, as we learn from the New York *Sun*, he carried to his father, who immediately adopted it.

"When will you do it, father?" asked the lad eagerly.

"I will begin to-morrow," was the answer, "and you shall help me."

The gentleman, notwithstanding he was a busy man and a member of one of the busiest firms in New York, began his experiment by the sale of coal in two accessible places.

What had suggested this charity was the fact that the poor necessarily buy their coal in quantities of from twenty-five to a hundred pounds, and have to pay about three times its value.

The lad's father proposed to sell a scuttleful of coal, or twenty-five pounds for much less than the people were accustomed to pay—or at cost.

At first the poor, who, we are sorry to say, have some reasons for suspecting the rich of trying to make them poorer, were somewhat skeptical as to the meaning of this abatement of cost. From their experiences they knew no reason why any man, especially a rich man, should bring tons of coal from the mines to New York to sell to them without gain to him.

They did not realize that the teachings of Christ who lived nineteen hundred years ago, could persuade a New Yorker to forego a legitimate profit. He must make money from the sale somehow. By some shrewdness or trickery he was sure, at their expense, they thought, to make an addition to his riches.

But the boy who conceived the idea went to the yards day after day, and saw to it that first one poor man and then another received an honest twenty-five pounds of coal for his pittance of money. No slate or refuse in that coal. It was honest fuel.

Soon the wonderful story was told among the poor of the city, until it is said there were thousands of destitute families supplied daily.

But the lad's coal was sold even below cost. For it was bought to be delivered only on the dock in New York, and the merchant bore the cost of having it handled after that, until it got into the poor man's hod.

By this means he gave steady employment to about two hundred men, who otherwise would have been idle, and for

whose labor the poor did not pay. That is charity with an emphasis. That is good will to men after the Master's own heart.

But what of the boy? Eager to see that his plan was fully carried out, he constantly went to the coal yards. In doing this he caught a serious cold which settled upon his lungs. Pneumonia followed and terminated fatally in a brief time. Why such a life, so full of promise, should be cut off when the world so greatly needs its Christlike influence, only God knows. Human reason is dumb before such a loss.

"Why not try bread at cost, father?" were among the last words of the dying lad.

To coal and bread the noble and bereaved merchant has added tea and coffee at cost. He has also opened lodging-houses, where a man can get a clean cot for the night, and bread and coffee for breakfast—all for five cents. This is below cost.

"At cost," is one of the mottoes of Christian service. Pecuniary gain is not considered when sincere men are working in partnership with Christ. And this man and this boy have exemplified it.—*Youth's Companion*.

LOVING BACK.

Little Alice was playing with her doll while her mother was writing. When her mother had finished the writing she told Alice that she might come and sit on her lap, and Alice said:

"I'm so glad! I wanted to love you so much, mamma."

"Did you, darling?" and she clasped her tenderly. "I am very glad that my little girl loves me so, but I fancy that you were not very lonely while I was writing; you and Dolly seemed to be having a happy time together."

"Yes, mamma, we were; but after a while I got tired of loving her."

"And why?"

"O just because she never loves me back."

"And is that why you love me?"

"That is one why, mamma; but not the first one, nor the best."

"And what is the first and best?"

"Why, mamma, don't you guess?" and the blue eyes grew very bright and earnest. "It's because you loved me when I was too little to love you back; that's why I love you so."

That was a very good reason, and even mamma herself could not have given a better one. That is one reason, also, why we should love the dear Lord: "Because he first loved us, and died to redeem us from sin."—*Our Little People*.